2025 CALS Mini Grant Program for Distance Education – Guidelines

1) The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) will award **mini grants of up to $7,500 each** for developing or refining distance education (DE) courses or components of courses.

2) Grant proposals must target one or more of the following:
   a. New courses or traditionally face-to-face courses planned for delivery via online platforms that serve a broad audience.
   b. Enhancing currently taught online courses with the goal of earning an "Exemplary" designation in the https://ocq.aa.ufl.edu/course-review-process/process-details/ program for teaching online and blended courses.
   c. An innovative teaching approach or quality online learning material or activity creating an exemplary online learning experience that can be used as a model across courses.

3) This call is open for both undergraduate and graduate courses. Eligible recipients include faculty with teaching appointments in CALS. Unsatisfactory completion of a previous mini-grant from CALS precludes eligibility for a 2025 mini-grant.

4) Proposals that address one or more of the following will be ranked higher:
   a. Designed to improve inclusive pedagogy.
   b. For courses that are integrated into programs developed for distance education-based on-book degree and certificate offerings or courses that support UF Quest.
   c. Address specific practices in the UF Quality Online Course Review process, particularly those that create significant learner interactions or applied and authentic learning activities to promote active engagement in learning and the development of critical thinking skills, including the development of online labs, will receive higher priority. This includes course re-design that de-emphasizes passive lectures and high-stakes exams.
   d. Potential to impact statewide teaching programs.
   e. Include *matching funds* from units (not a requirement).

5) The proposals will be evaluated and ranked by the CALS Dean's Office based on the potential for improving academic instruction using either asynchronous or synchronous online delivery technologies in a variety of instructional settings. For example:
   a. Online 100% (all online) asynchronous web based.
   b. Synchronous using technology such as Zoom and HyFlex (combination of in-person and synchronous online teaching).
   c. Online 80% - 99% (online with some in-person exams or projects). This delivery method is particularly helpful for international students wishing to be federally compliant with their visa.

   Additionally, proposals will be evaluated for their potential impact and feasibility in the context of allocated funds, clarity, and focus. Final funding decisions will rest with Dean Kati Migliaccio.

6) Mini grants may be used to:
   a. Purchase software or services (such as for off-campus video).
   b. Hire temporary workers (OPS).
   c. Outsource labor, including buying out faculty teaching time (*with consultation and approval of your unit leader*) to allow the faculty time to work on the mini grant.
   d. Purchase other instructional materials directly related to the project. Mini grants *may not* be used for purchasing expendable course supplies and materials (use material and supply fees and distance learning fees for this).
   e. Attend online or in-person conferences or workshops. Travel funds can be requested.

   Mini-grant proposals may not be tied together, thereby awarding more than $7,500 to a single project. However, common resources can be used to support different projects (e.g., hiring a person for $22,500 to assist 3 separate projects).

7) Each project must include an educational deliverable available for use no later than Spring semester 2026. *A project development timeline (minimum of six month duration) must be included with the proposal* (see the Suggested Timeline for Course Development). For proposals requesting funding for innovative approaches or materials that will be used in a course that has not been fully developed, include time for course development on the timeline. Additional time of no later than June 30, 2026, may be added to the timeline for projects in that situation.

8) **The deadline for proposal submission is Friday January 10, 2025,** and proposals must be submitted using the format provided in this document. Recipients of mini grants will be notified by February 7, 2025, and funds transferred soon thereafter. **Submit your proposal as a Word or PDF document to Allen Wysocki (wysocki@ufl.edu).**

9) Principal Investigators may be required to meet with staff members of the CALS Faculty Instructional Resources and Support Team (FIRST) **after** your proposal is approved and **before** funds are released, for instructional design and technology suggestions.

10) Successful recipients will be required to:
   a. By the end of the project, complete the initial requirements for the UF Quality Online Course Review program for courses that are 80% or more online:
      - Complete the Great Online Course Series workshops from the Center for Teaching Excellence.
      - Complete a course alignment map for a new course or course revision that will be submitted as part of the course review process.
   b. Submit a final project report by December 15, 2025. For projects developing innovative approaches or materials in a course that is not yet fully developed, an interim report should be provided by December 15, 2025, and a final report by June 30, 2026. *Funds will be returned to CALS* if the project is not completed, and a report filed by the deadline. The report is to include:
      - Project title.
      - People involved.
      - Department(s) represented.
      - Objectives of the proposal.
      - Funds awarded.
      - Funds utilized (full accounting of expenditures, and any unspent funds returned to the Dean's office).
      - Project accomplishments.
      - Copy of your course alignment map.
      - Copy of the timeline for submitting the course through the UF Quality Online Course Review, or the results of that review process.

11) Funded projects will be tracked for completion of the UF Quality Online Course Review process.

12) It is strongly suggested that in addition to the Great Online Course series workshops, recipients complete at least two other professional development workshops or events related to the project, from among offerings by the Center for Instructional Technology and Training or the Center for Teaching Excellence (some of which count toward the Passport to Great Teaching badging program).

13) Recipients may be invited to present their projects at the annual CALS Teaching Enhancement Symposium in August or to present or share information about their project as part of an online project showcase.

Questions: Al Wysocki, 2020 McCarty Hall D (352-392-1963), wysocki@ufl.edu.

[Maximum length = three pages]

Include the following components in your proposal:
Submit your proposal as a Word or PDF document to Allen Wysocki (wysocki@ufl.edu).

Project title:

Name(s):

Course(s) involved:

Department/Program:

Delivery category*:
- Online 100% (all online).
- Online 80-99% (online with some in-person exams or projects).
- HyFlex (in-person and synchronous online offered at the same time).

Project type(s):
A. Development of new or traditionally face-to-face course(s) for online delivery.
B. Enhancement of currently taught online course(s) to earn an "Exemplary" designation in the UF Quality Online Course Designations program.
C. Development of an innovative online teaching approach, learning material or activity.

Objective(s):
For project types B and C, identification of practice(s) from the UF Quality Online Course Designations program rubric targeted by this project (projects of type A should use the UF Quality Online Course Designations program rubric to guide course development but do not need to identify specific practices here).

Justification (why do you need funding to complete the project?):

Timeline and Procedures (include an expanded timeline if proposing a project of for a course that is not yet fully developed):

Deliverables and anticipated benefits (include the intended impact on student success):

Funds requested: $._____. [Please itemize expenditures]